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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Shigeki KATO et al.

Group Art Unit: 2851

Application No.: 10/779,678

Examiner: C. Mahoney

Filed: February 18, 2004

Docket No.: 118665

For: REAR PROJECTOR

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the December 2, 2004 Office Action, reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Claims 1-2 are presently pending.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,548,350 (hereinafter Yamada). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As shown in Fig. 1 of the present specification, a rear projector includes a housing 2 including an opening 21 defined by an opening edge portion 22 of the housing 2. A screen panel 3 is attached to the front side of the housing such that the opening edge portion 22 of the housing 2 and a periphery 34 of the screen panel are opposed to each other. A dust-proofing elastic member 7 is disposed between the periphery 34 of the screen panel 3 and the opening edge portion 22 of the housing 2. Thus, in the rear projector, the screen panel 3 is fixed to the housing 2 so that a periphery 34 of the screen panel 3 and an opening edge

portion 22 of the housing 2 sandwich the dust-proofing elastic member 7. Claim 1 defines a rear projector having a structure such as illustrated in Fig. 1.

Claim 1 recites that the screen panel is attached to the front side of the housing such that the opening edge portion of the housing and a periphery of the screen panel are opposed to each other, the opening edge portion and the screen panel sandwiching the dust-proofing elastic member therebetween. This structure as recited in claim 1 requires the screen panel to be directly fixed to the housing, with a dust-proofing elastic member therebetween. Yamada fails to teach or suggest such direct attachment or the benefits associated therewith.

Yamada describes a projection type television in which the screen is maintained on the framework even when the temperature changes or an external force is applied. See the Abstract. As shown in Fig. 2 of Yamada, the screen 1 is mounted in framework 2, and an end portion of this framework 2 is inserted into a slot 3b formed around an opening 3a of the housing 3. See col. 4, lines 64-67 and col. 5, lines 8-12. The framework 2 in Yamada is thus an intermediate piece between the screen 1 and the housing 3.

Yamada thus fails to teach or suggest a rear projector in which a screen panel is directly fixed to a housing as in claim 1. That is, Yamada fails to teach or suggest a screen panel that is attached to the housing such that opening edge portion of the housing and a periphery of the screen panel are opposed to each other as required in claim 1.

In addition, because Yamada fails to teach or suggest the direct fixing between the screen panel and housing as in claim 1, Yamada also necessarily fails to teach or suggest incorporation of a dust-proofing elastic member disposed between the periphery of the screen panel and the opening edge portion of the housing, also as required in claim 1.

The distinctions between the structures described in Yamada and recited in present claim 1 are not trivial. As discussed in the present specification, the rear projector structure of claim 1 not only allows the screen panel to be stably held in the housing, it also prevents

the entry of dust into the housing. See, for example, paragraphs 7 and 20-22 of the present specification.

On the other hand, the mounting system described in Yamada only indirectly mounts the screen to the housing through the use of the intermediate framework 2. At the point of insertion of the framework 2 into the slot 3b of the housing 3 in Yamada, Yamada does not teach or suggest the use of any dust-proofing elastic members at all. Because of this, there is a distinct possibility in Yamada that a space may be generated between the end portion of the framework 2 and the slot 3b of the opening 3a. The structure in Yamada thus does not avoid the problem of dust entering the housing 3 at this location.

While Yamada teaches that an elastic member 5 may be included between the framework 2 and the screen 1, Yamada teaches that this elastic member is only used to assist in holding the screen in the framework 2. Yamada thus does not address the problem of dust entering the housing at all.

As such, Yamada fails to teach or suggest the dust-proofing advantages of the structure of the rear projector as recited in present claim 1, and thus nothing in Yamada would have led one of ordinary skill in the art to have altered the structure in Yamada in the manner necessary to achieve the structure of claim 1 and the advantages associated therewith.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Yamada fails to anticipate the rear projector of claim 1.

Dependent claim 2 adds that the dust-proofing elastic member is formed of a closed-cell expanded resin. In the Office Action, the Patent Office alleged that Yamada described this type of resin at col. 6, lines 48-62. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Yamada describes that the elastic member 5 may be comprised of materials such as polyurethane foam, polyethylene foam or other plastic foams that include small pores. See col. 6, lines 55-62. Contrary to the characterization in the Office Action, Yamada does

not teach or suggest that the elastic member 5 may be specifically comprised of a closed-cell expanded resin as required in claim 2. A closed-cell expanded resin as defined in claim 2 has the advantage of being excellent in suppressing dust from entering the housing, while also having a high elastic deformation ratio. Yamada does not teach or suggest use of a closed-cell expanded resin as the elastic member 5. Nor would one of ordinary skill in the art have been led to select a closed-cell expanded resin as the elastic member 5 in Yamada, because Yamada does not teach or suggest the use of the elastic member in suppressing dust.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Yamada also does not teach or suggest use of a closed-cell expanded resin as recited in dependent claim 2.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is evident that Yamada neither teaches nor suggests the rear projector as defined in claims 1 and 2. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 2 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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